

*Fishery Commission under the Treaty of
Washington of 8th May, 1871.*

CASE OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

Introduction.

IN laying the case of Her Majesty's Government before the Commissioners, it will be desirable to commence by a brief history of the Fisheries Question since the outbreak of the War of Independence in 1775.

Before the commencement of this war all British colonists enjoyed equal privileges in matters connected with fishing, but at its close, and on the conclusion of peace, it became a question how far such privileges should be restored to those who had separated from the British Crown. The matter was very fully discussed in the negotiations which preceded the Treaty of the 3rd September, 1783, and though Great Britain did not deny the right of the American citizens to fish on the Great Banks of Newfoundland, or in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, or elsewhere in the open sea, she denied their right to fish in British waters, or to land in British territory for the purpose of drying or curing their fish. A compromise was at length arrived at, and it was agreed that United States' fishermen should be at liberty to fish on such part of the Coast of Newfoundland as British fishermen could use, but not to dry or cure their fish on that Island; and they were also to be allowed to fish on the coasts, bays, and creeks of other British Possessions in North

Negotiations in 1783.